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the Soviet Union, representing a token of confidence unheard of before, would be welcome. "As a sovereign state we can, of course, not tolerate an inimical island in the midst of our territory; that is, we must solve the Berlin question and, in my opinion, this question will be solved by the spring of 1951."

- d. In response to a query by one of the other individuals present, as to whether sufficient forces were available for such action, Oelssner smilingly voiced the belief that the forces available were sufficient to solve quite other problems, which, however, must be dealt with at a later date. He went on to say that aside from these, the development of the D.D.R. should be clear to all who give any heed to the SED resolution. It indicates that the number of people's owned enterprises will be increased, which means that a large number of private enterprises will be made the property of the people. It also shows that state-controlled trade will be expanded and that further liquidation of private trade will be accomplished. More of the large estates will be divided into smaller holdings for the benefit of farmers and agricultural workers who are in need of land. A large-scale campaign will be conducted against the Church which opposes the new system, and reactionary elements will be eliminated from the cultural field. To the KPD comrades Oelssner declared that by speeding up the democratization of their republic the people in the D.D.R. set an example for the Western German workers and that now it is up to the KPD to convince the Western Germans of the righteousness of the Eastern German policy.
3. Prior to the SED Convention the SED Politbureau decided to hold a conference with the delegates from Western Germany. Though it was intended that this conference be held before the beginning of the convention, the date finally chosen was 25 July 1950. The conference was held at the former Admiralspalast, now the State Opera. The West delegates were handed special entrance tickets and were advised that without these additional tickets no delegate would be admitted to the conference. The delegates were also told that the conference would be held behind closed doors and that seats had to be taken prior to 2 p.m. When the conference finally convened at 2 p.m. the ushers were directed to leave and were replaced by Volkspolizei personnel who guarded the entrances. The entire SED Politbureau and the newly elected SED Central Committee appeared shortly after 2 p.m.
4. The conference opened with a speech by Comrade Franz Dähle who made the following statements:

"The criticism which Comrade Pieck voiced regarding KPD activity in Western Germany and the manner in which Comrades Grotewohl and Ulbricht dealt with the KPD problem will show you that we consider the KPD activity in Western Germany as being of utmost importance for the materialization of our objectives in all of Germany. In self-criticism we admit that we have failed to give you the necessary attention as only one member of the Politbureau has been charged with dealing with your problems. Only now have we become aware that the importance of the tasks set before the KPD requires the commitment of the entire SED Politbureau. Now, however, there will be a complete change and the entire SED Politbureau will devote its attention to your problems. Not only will we make decisions binding for your activities, but we also will control the execution of these decisions, since only in this manner can the unity of Germany, which all decent Germans are striving for, be effected. To insure successful execution of the missions which you will be assigned in the near future, the KPD must give priority to the task of thoroughly purging its corps of functionaries of all agents, opportunists, and other enemies of the party.

In that respect we will continue to give you valuable hints. There must be no doubt that the criterion of a true KPD functionary is his attitude towards the U.S.S.R., Poland and the D.D.R. Should there be doubts the functionary must be replaced. We can only use such functionaries as solve their tasks according to our directives. The second mission which also must be tackled most energetically is a large-scale propaganda campaign designed to spread the truth concerning the conditions prevailing in the D.D.R. The masses must also be made aware that the SED is the only

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party which can show the German people the way out of their national misery. Appropriate measures will soon be taken by us. Guests from Western Germany will be invited to all meetings. The VVN, the Demokratische Frauenbund Deutschlands (DFD), the FDJ and the Vereinigung der Gegenseitigen Bauernhilfe (VdgB) will establish close connections with similar organizations in Western Germany and will show them the virtues of our democratic order. Large farmers' meetings will be conducted to make the Western German farmers, who are not able to market their products, aware of the propriety of our policy. In fact, we will even invite Western German governments in the name of our Land governments. We will invite industrialists and give them orders for their goods. From experience we have learned that this is quite possible without the consent of the Bonn Government; moreover, there are enough intelligent industrialists in Western Germany, who, because of their miserable economic situation, are inclined to make contracts with the D.D.R. At the same time you must continue to speak the truth at meetings and in your party papers and to oppose, with good arguments, all agitators. In that respect, the value of the scheduled mass meeting of 100,000 persons in Dortmund cannot be overemphasized. We as well as you must make every effort to make this meeting a powerful demonstration for peace, for the unity of Germany, for the withdrawal of occupation forces and for the national independence of Germany. We will send FDJ cultural groups to Western Germany prior to that meeting in an effort to advertise the meeting through their presence there. We will also send specialists to Western Germany who are to make speeches at various meetings. As for you, it is of the utmost importance that you persuade all indifferent persons to participate in the meeting. Thus we will give you every possible support in order that the mass meeting will be a complete success. There must be no doubt that this meeting will be carried out regardless of whether Mr. Adenauer likes it or not. "

5. The second speaker was Max Reimann who stated that, in self-criticism, he had to admit that he failed to become aware of Nuding's detrimental activities early enough and that they had to be brought to his attention by the SED Politbureau. This, however, was a serious warning to him and he stated that in the future he would take immediate action whenever weaknesses should appear. He then reviewed in detail the blunders which Hermann Nuding had committed as a member of the Parteivorstand.
 - a. Nuding refused to make known a prepared SED address sent to the Solingen conference of the KPD because it called for active support of the U.S.S.R. in case of aggression. This, however, is taken for granted by all German workers.
 - b. Nuding prevented the elimination of KPD comrades prominent in the labor union movement who were recognized as opportunists. Consequently, it has not been possible for the KPD to influence the labor unions sufficiently.
 - c. Nuding, because he underestimated the fighting spirit of the workers, failed to comply with the directive of the SED Politbureau which demanded the instigation of a variety of strikes in Western Germany. Thus he undermined the confidence which the workers had placed in the KPD in Western Germany. This was manifested most clearly in the elections in Northrhine-Westphalia.

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- d. Nuding ignored the directive of the SED Politbureau which called for a large-scale peace campaign by the Western German labor unions because he failed to realize that the KPD could take the lead in the struggle for peace. Therefore, he is to blame for the fading away of the struggle for peace after initial successes.

Walter Fisch supported Hermann Nuding in his detrimental conceptions and thus forfeited the right of holding leading positions in the party. As chief editor of the KPD paper Freies Volk, Hugo Ehrlich, like his predecessor, was not vigilant enough and admitted articles to the paper which were detrimental to the party. He also was completely incapable of holding the position of editor-in-chief. Effective today he will be divested of all of his functions and replaced by an editorial staff which will be composed of Comrades Emil Carlebach, Rudi Singer, and a comrade from Southern Germany.

6. After this vitriolic attack by Max Reimann, Hermann Nuding was allowed to defend himself. In self-criticism he admitted being guilty of Pieck's and Reimann's accusations stating that he had been completely under the influence of the agent, Kurt Mueller, and implicitly obeyed the latter's orders. He stated that, with Mueller uncovered, he was aware that he had damaged party interests seriously and he promised that in the future he would execute with the utmost accuracy all missions assigned to him. When Nuding finished his speech Wilhelm Pieck engaged him in the following conversation from the speaker's rostrum:

Pieck: "What you have told us can only be considered a mere lip confession. In your self-criticism you lack that repentance which might persuade us of the veracity of your words. However, you appear to make every effort to retain leading positions. This of course is a matter of the past."

Nuding: "Comrade Pieck, I can say no more, for I was forbidden by the SED Politbureau to involve SED functionaries in this matter; I was ordered to bear full responsibility upon my own shoulders."

Pieck: "Well, that is right. But if one repeatedly commits such serious blunders over a long period of time and inflicts so much harm upon the party we are forced to assume that he does it for a definite purpose or that he is stupid. You are not stupid, but on the contrary a very intelligent fellow, so what?"

Nuding: "I cannot make any comment."

Pieck: (with a derogatory wave of his hand) "Well, we shall see, the issue is not yet closed."

7. After several debates of minor importance Otto Grotewohl delivered an address in which he stated the following:

"The most outstanding weakness of the KPD in its development since 1945 in Western Germany is the fact that it has permitted itself to lag behind events. Only under such circumstances could it have been possible for a situation to develop in which the class enemy is able to dictate to the KPD the place, time and manner for joining battle. This weakness must be overcome. The KPD must set the pace for Western German development, must be ahead of events and must beat the enemy where and when it is deemed necessary. Then Communism will soon score tremendous successes. Western Germany's economic struggle, which undoubtedly is a very

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difficult one, must be transformed into a political fight. The KPD must penetrate the masses, must be aware of their troubles, must spread propaganda among the workers and foment strikes. When a strike is in progress, the party must remain in the background, for conducting the strike is the responsibility of the labor unions. Living conditions will deteriorate further in Western Germany and there will be ample opportunities for provoking strikes. By intensive agitation among all strata of the population the KPD must create such a situation that one strike follows another in Western Germany. The working masses must constantly be stirred to action. Are the unemployed, the people who receive hand-outs or live on social relief, the war widows, and those who suffered losses in air raids content with their lot? No, I say, and no again, comrades! Now who will attempt to tell me that the situation in Western Germany requires a special Western German treatment? Our working principles are the same in all capitalistic countries. The masses must not be blamed if the KPD in Western Germany failed to show the right path. The responsibility rests with the party, namely the party in the West. The KPD will need to establish new and determined cadres able to conduct an intensified struggle. We believe that it is appropriate to approach former Nazis, SS members and other in similar categories. Many of these people today are still unsettled politically and need only be approached in the proper manner. We know from experience that these people are inclined to go from one extreme to the other and we are able to report that our experiences with these people have been good, that nearly all of them have proved themselves very active comrades once their past was forgotten. Another factor which demands attention is the hostility of the population toward the occupation powers. Every Communist must be an agitator who, day after day and hour after hour, spreads propaganda wherever he is, then, with the majority of the Western German population persuaded of the righteousness of the SED program, we shall force the unity of Germany."

8. After several other contributions of minor importance to the discussion Walter Ulbricht, in the final address, stated the following:

"Save a few exceptions, the debates of our Western German comrades have demonstrated that the KPD in Western Germany is working under grave ideological deficiencies. It is quite clear that it is impossible to persuade a person if one is not convinced of one's own words. I therefore suggest that the functionaries be given at once a thorough course of instruction in the history of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. (Molotovist). I also advise the comrades in Western Germany who are editors to carry verbatim reports of the convention addresses delivered by Comrade Piech, Grotewohl and me in all KPD newspapers as those speeches are of the greatest importance for the future work of the KPD and contribute decisively toward orienting the comrades properly with respect to ideology and the political line. KPD newspapers in Western Germany, by the way, are very inefficient. They touch only upon the principal political questions and fail to place emphasis on the great example of the U.S.S.R., the people's democracies and the D.D.R. In newspapers as well as in meetings you must always stress the importance of the U.S.S.R., of Poland and the D.D.R."

At this point a Western German comrade who asked to be heard stated:

"If we increase our propaganda for the U.S.S.R. we shall have still fewer followers."

Ulbricht replied:

"That is completely erroneous. It should be remembered that, in the first place, debating is a matter of conviction, and secondly that there is no denying that the workers in the Rhine-Ruhr area are true

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partisans of the U.S.S.R. You were defeated in the elections because you were not active enough and therefore were deserted by the workers who lost confidence in you. One of the most important missions is the fight for peace. It is of decisive importance that, of the many problems to be solved, the central problem be solved first as its solution brings the other problems nearer solution. The present central problem is the fight for peace. In that respect you have been very inefficient. The collection of signatures will certainly continue to be the primary mission in the struggle for peace. This project, however, represents only one side of the fight. Those striving for peace must now take action. We have heard no reports of Western German women patriots lying down on railroad tracks to prevent shipments of war material from passing. In France, however, such things did happen. This indicates plainly that also in the struggle for peace you are behind events. You must prepare for a dogged resistance against war preparations. It is good that we know that bridges in your area are being prepared for demolition. We would prefer to know, however, that, because of your resistance, it was impossible for such preparations to be made. These are the great tasks which must be faced by the KPD today. They must be solved and must be solved quickly in order that the enemy can be prevented from converting our fatherland into a complete desert through a new war. I should like to emphasize Comrade Pieck's statement that we will give you every conceivable support in your bitter fight in order that our joint efforts for peace, the unity of Germany, the withdrawal of the occupation powers and national independence be crowned with complete success. The present conference has made it clear that it will be necessary to meet and confer with the prominent comrades among you more often in order to insure successful conduct of your struggle. *

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Comment. Many KPD delegates believe that Max Reimann is no longer in the good graces of the SED. Inasmuch as he enjoys considerable popularity with the Western German population, it is likely that he will be retained as a figure head. Fritz Sperling, second chairman of the KPD, appears to be the man who in the future will enjoy the full confidence of the SED.

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